

**REPORT OF THE AUDIT OF THE  
FORMER MERCER COUNTY  
CLERK**

**For The Period January 1, 2003  
Through June 30, 2003**



**EDWARD B. HATCHETT, JR.**  
**AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS**  
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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **AUDIT EXAMINATION OF THE FORMER MERCER COUNTY CLERK**

**For The Period January 1, 2003  
Through June 30, 2003**

The Auditor of Public Accounts has completed the former Mercer County Clerk's audit for the period January 1, 2003 through June 30, 2003. We have issued an unqualified opinion on the financial statement taken as a whole. Based upon the audit work performed, the financial statement is presented fairly in all material respects.

#### **Financial Condition:**

Excess fees were \$67,502 for the period January 1, 2003 through June 30, 2003. Revenues were \$2,215,793 and disbursements were \$2,148,291.

#### **Debt Obligations:**

Lease principal agreements totaled \$19,155 as of June 30, 2003.

#### **Report Comment:**

- Lacks Adequate Segregation Of Duties

#### **Deposits:**

The former Clerk's deposits were insured and collateralized by bank securities or bonds.



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**EDWARD B. HATCHETT, JR.**  
**AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS**

To the People of Kentucky

Honorable Paul E. Patton, Governor  
Gordon C. Duke, Secretary  
Finance and Administration Cabinet  
Dana Mayton, Secretary, Revenue Cabinet  
Honorable John D. Trisler, Mercer County Judge/Executive  
Honorable Larry Short, Former Mercer County Clerk  
Honorable Bruce Harper, Mercer County Clerk  
Members of the Mercer County Fiscal Court

Independent Auditor's Report

We have audited the accompanying statement of receipts, disbursements, and excess fees of the former County Clerk of Mercer County, Kentucky, for the period January 1, 2003 through June 30, 2003. This financial statement is the responsibility of the former County Clerk. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on this financial statement based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and the Audit Guide for County Fee Officials issued by the Auditor of Public Accounts, Commonwealth of Kentucky. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statement is free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statement. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

As described in Note 1, the County Clerk's office prepares the financial statement on a prescribed basis of accounting that demonstrates compliance with the modified cash basis and laws of Kentucky, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In our opinion, the financial statement referred to above presents fairly, in all material respects, the receipts, disbursements, and excess fees of the former County Clerk for the period January 1, 2003 through June 30, 2003, in conformity with the modified cash basis of accounting.



To the People of Kentucky  
Honorable Paul E. Patton, Governor  
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In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, we have also issued our report dated August 7, 2003, on our consideration of the former County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards and should be read in conjunction with this report in considering the results of our audit.

Based on the results of our audit, we have presented the accompanying comment and recommendation, included herein, which discusses the following report comment:

- Lacks Adequate Segregation Of Duties

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Hatchett", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Edward B. Hatchett, Jr.  
Auditor of Public Accounts

Audit fieldwork completed -  
August 7, 2003



MERCER COUNTY  
LARRY SHORT, FORMER COUNTY CLERK  
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES

For The Period January 1, 2003 Through June 30, 2003

Receipts

|              |    |       |
|--------------|----|-------|
| Fiscal Court | \$ | 3,599 |
|--------------|----|-------|

Licenses and Taxes:

Motor Vehicle-

|                        |    |         |
|------------------------|----|---------|
| Licenses and Transfers | \$ | 331,920 |
|------------------------|----|---------|

|           |  |         |
|-----------|--|---------|
| Usage Tax |  | 745,817 |
|-----------|--|---------|

|                                |  |         |
|--------------------------------|--|---------|
| Tangible Personal Property Tax |  | 914,657 |
|--------------------------------|--|---------|

Licenses-

|          |  |       |
|----------|--|-------|
| Marriage |  | 2,864 |
|----------|--|-------|

|                   |  |        |
|-------------------|--|--------|
| Deed Transfer Tax |  | 28,743 |
|-------------------|--|--------|

|                |        |           |
|----------------|--------|-----------|
| Delinquent Tax | 98,976 | 2,122,977 |
|----------------|--------|-----------|

Fees Collected for Services:

Recordings-

|                                 |    |       |
|---------------------------------|----|-------|
| Deeds, Easements, and Contracts | \$ | 6,635 |
|---------------------------------|----|-------|

|                       |  |        |
|-----------------------|--|--------|
| Real Estate Mortgages |  | 30,159 |
|-----------------------|--|--------|

|  |  |        |
|--|--|--------|
| Chattel Mortgages and Financing Statements |  | 27,151 |
|--|--|--------|

|                    |  |     |
|--------------------|--|-----|
| Powers of Attorney |  | 715 |
|--------------------|--|-----|

|                      |  |        |
|----------------------|--|--------|
| All Other Recordings |  | 14,440 |
|----------------------|--|--------|

Charges for Other Services-

|                       |  |    |
|-----------------------|--|----|
| Candidate Filing Fees |  | 50 |
|-----------------------|--|----|

|          |       |        |
|----------|-------|--------|
| Copywork | 7,754 | 86,904 |
|----------|-------|--------|

Other:

|         |  |       |
|---------|--|-------|
| Refunds |  | 1,363 |
|---------|--|-------|

|               |  |     |
|---------------|--|-----|
| Miscellaneous |  | 100 |
|---------------|--|-----|

|                 |  |     |
|-----------------|--|-----|
| Interest Earned |  | 950 |
|-----------------|--|-----|

|                |    |           |
|----------------|----|-----------|
| Total Receipts | \$ | 2,215,893 |
|----------------|----|-----------|

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this financial statement.

MERCER COUNTY  
 LARRY SHORT, FORMER COUNTY CLERK  
 STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES  
 For The Period January 1, 2003 Through June 30, 2003  
 (Continued)

Disbursements

Payments to State:

Motor Vehicle-

Licenses and Transfers \$ 253,727

Usage Tax 723,440

Tangible Personal Property Tax 325,488

Licenses, Taxes, and Fees-

Delinquent Tax 15,125

Legal Process Tax 9,409 \$ 1,327,189

Payments to Fiscal Court:

Tangible Personal Property Tax \$ 60,125

Delinquent Tax 9,842

Deed Transfer Tax 27,454 97,421

Payments to Other Districts:

Tangible Personal Property Tax \$ 502,658

Delinquent Tax 44,371 547,029

Payments to Sheriff

3,563

Payments to County Attorney

17,780

Operating Disbursements:

Personnel Services-

Deputies' Salaries \$ 90,602

Part-Time Salaries 200

Contracted Services-

Fish and Game 7,062

Advertising 3,855

Materials and Supplies-

Office Supplies 6,930

Miscellaneous 248

Other Charges-

Conventions and Travel 1,713

Dues 1,363

Postage 3,141

Insufficient Fund Checks 720 115,834

Total Disbursements

\$ 2,108,816

MERCER COUNTY

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this financial statement.

LARRY SHORT, FORMER COUNTY CLERK  
 STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND EXCESS FEES  
 For The Period January 1, 2003 Through June 30, 2003  
 (Continued)

|   |              |                    |
|---|--------------|--------------------|
| Net Receipts  |              | \$ 107,077         |
| Less: Statutory Maximum                                   | \$ 34,153    |                    |
| Training Incentive  | <u>3,036</u> | <u>37,189</u>      |
| Excess Fees   |              | \$ 69,888          |
| Less: Expense Allowance                                   |              | <u>1,800</u>       |
| Excess Fees Due County for the Period Ended June 30, 2003 |              | \$ 68,088          |
| Payments to County Treasurer - July 28, 2003              | \$ 67,502    |                    |
| July 31, 2003   | <u>586</u>   | <u>68,088</u>      |
| Balance Due at Completion of Audit                        |              | <u><u>\$ 0</u></u> |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this financial statement.

MERCER COUNTY  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT

June 30, 2003

Note 1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

A. Fund Accounting

A fee official uses a fund to report on the results of operations. A fund is a separate accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. Fund accounting is designed to demonstrate legal compliance and to aid financial management by segregating transactions related to certain government functions or activities.

A fee official uses a fund for fees to account for activities for which the government desires periodic determination of the excess of receipts over disbursements to facilitate management control, accountability, and compliance with laws.

B. Basis of Accounting

The financial statement has been prepared on a modified cash basis of accounting, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Under this basis of accounting, certain receipts and certain expenditures are recognized as a result of accrual at December 31.

The measurement focus of a fee official is upon excess fees. Remittance of excess fees is due to the County Treasurer in the subsequent year.

C. Cash and Investments

At the direction of the fiscal court, KRS 66.480 authorizes the County Clerk's office to invest in the following, including but not limited to, obligations of the United States and of its agencies and instrumentalities, obligations and contracts for future delivery or purchase of obligations backed by the full faith and credit of the United States, obligations of any corporation of the United States government, bonds or certificates of indebtedness of this state, and certificates of deposit issued by or other interest-bearing accounts of any bank or savings and loan institution which are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) or which are collateralized, to the extent uninsured, by any obligation permitted by KRS 41.240(4).

Note 2. Employee Retirement System

The county officials and employees have elected to participate in the County Employees Retirement System (CERS), pursuant to KRS 78.530 administered by the Board of Trustees of the Kentucky Retirement Systems. This is a multiple-employer public retirement system that covers all eligible full-time employees. Benefit contributions and provisions are established by statute. Nonhazardous covered employees are required to contribute 5.0 percent of their salary to the plan. The county's contribution rate for nonhazardous employees was 6.34 percent for the audit period.

MERCER COUNTY  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT  
June 30, 2003  
(Continued)

Note 2. Employee Retirement System (Continued)

Benefits fully vest on reaching five years of service for nonhazardous employees. Aspects of benefits for nonhazardous employees include retirement after 27 years of service or age 65.

Historical trend information pertaining to CERS' progress in accumulating sufficient assets to pay benefits when due is presented in the Kentucky Retirement Systems' annual financial report which is a matter of public record.

Note 3. Deposits

The former County Clerk maintained deposits of public funds with depository institutions insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). According to KRS 64.480(1)(d) and KRS 41.240(4), the depository institution should pledge or provide sufficient collateral which, together with FDIC insurance, equals or exceeds the amount of public funds on deposit at all times. In order to be valid against the FDIC in the event of failure or insolvency of the depository institution, this pledge or provision of collateral should be evidenced by an agreement between the former County Clerk and the depository institution, signed by both parties, that is (a) in writing, (b) approved by the board of directors of the depository institution or its loan committee, which approval must be reflected in the minutes of the board or committee, and (c) an official record of the depository institution. These requirements were met, and as of June 30, 2003, the former County Clerk's deposits were fully insured or collateralized at a 100% level with collateral of either pledged securities held by the former County Clerk's agent in the former County Clerk's name, or provided surety bond which named the former County Clerk as beneficiary/obligee on the bond.

Note 4. Leases

The Clerk's office is committed to the following lease agreements as of June 30, 2003:

| Item<br>Purchased | Monthly<br>Payment | Term Of<br>Agreement | Ending<br>Date | Principal<br>Balance<br>June 30,<br>2003 |
|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|--|
| Copier            | \$ 275             | 60 Months            | February 2004  | \$ 2,311                                 |
| Copier            | 68                 | 60 Months            | April 2004     | 1,446                                    |
| Copier            | 68                 | 60 Months            | June 2005      | 1,688                                    |
| Copier            | 77                 | 60 Months            | February 2004  | 624                                      |
| Equipment         | 727                | 60 Months            | January 2005   | 13,086                                   |

Note 5. Software License Agreement

The office of the County Clerk is committed to a software license agreement with Software Management, Inc., for the period of January 25, 2000 through January 31, 2005. The agreement requires an annual payment of \$5,400 (\$450 per month). The total balance of the agreement was \$7,560 as of June 30, 2003.

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COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATION





MERCER COUNTY  
LARRY SHORT, FORMER COUNTY CLERK  
COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATION

For The Period January 1, 2003  
Through June 30, 2003

STATE LAWS AND REGULATIONS:

None.

INTERNAL CONTROL - REPORTABLE CONDITION AND MATERIAL WEAKNESS:

Lacks Adequate Segregation Of Duties

The Clerk's office has a lack of segregation of duties. Due to the entity's diversity of official operations, small size and budget restrictions the official has limited options for establishing an adequate segregation of duties. We recommend that the following compensating controls be implemented to offset this internal control weakness:

- The Clerk should periodically compare a daily bank deposit to the daily checkout sheet and then compare the daily checkout sheet to the receipts ledger. Any differences should be reconciled. He could document this by initialing the bank deposit, daily checkout sheet, and receipts ledger.
- The Clerk should compare the quarterly financial report to receipts and disbursements ledgers for accuracy. The Clerk should also compare the salaries listed on the quarterly report to the individual earning records. Any differences should be reconciled. The Clerk could document this by initialing the quarterly financial report.
- The Clerk should periodically compare invoices to payments. The Clerk could document this by initialing the invoices.
- The Clerk should periodically compare the bank reconciliation to the balance in the checkbook. Any differences should be reconciled. The Clerk could document this by initialing the bank reconciliation and the balance in the checkbook.

*County Clerk's Response:*

*None.*

PRIOR YEAR:

- Lacks Adequate Segregation Of Duties

*This comment has not been corrected and is repeated above.*

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REPORT ON COMPLIANCE  
AND ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL  
REPORTING BASED ON AN AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT  
PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS





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**Report On Compliance And On Internal Control  
Over Financial Reporting Based On An Audit Of The Financial  
Statement Performed In Accordance With Government Auditing Standards**

We have audited the statement of receipts, disbursements, and excess fees of the former Mercer County Clerk for the period January 1, 2003 through June 30, 2003, and have issued our report thereon dated August 7, 2003. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Compliance

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the former Mercer County Clerk's financial statement for the period January 1, 2003 through June 30, 2003, is free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance that are required to be reported under Government Auditing Standards.

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit, we considered the former Mercer County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting in order to determine our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statement and not to provide assurance on the internal control over financial reporting. However, we noted a certain matter involving the internal control over financial reporting and its operation that we consider to be a reportable condition.



Report On Compliance And On Internal Control  
Over Financial Reporting Based On An Audit Of The Financial  
Statement Performed In Accordance With Government Auditing Standards  
(Continued)

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting (Continued)

Reportable conditions involve matters coming to our attention relating to significant deficiencies in the design or operation of the internal control over financial reporting that, in our judgment, could adversely affect the entity's ability to record, process, summarize, and report financial data consistent with the assertions of management in the financial statement. The reportable condition is described in the accompanying comment and recommendation.

- Lacks Adequate Segregation Of Duties

A material weakness is a condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements in amounts that would be material in relation to the financial statement being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions. Our consideration of the internal control over financial reporting would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control that might be reportable conditions and, accordingly, would not necessarily disclose all reportable conditions that are also considered to be material weaknesses. However, we consider the reportable condition described above to be a material weakness.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of management and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than the specified party.

Respectfully submitted,



Edward B. Hatchett, Jr.  
Auditor of Public Accounts

Audit fieldwork completed -  
August 7, 2003

